Oklahoma Chess Monthly

FEBRUARY 2020

Chess News and Chess History for Oklahoma

Some Chess Humor, page 3.

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- Holiday Open 2019
- What You Really Look Like
- IM John Donaldson Review
- Plus News Bites, Game of the Month, Puzzles, Top 25 List, Tournament Reports, and more.

SURPRISES AT THE ANNUAL HOLIDAY OPEN

by Tom Braunlich

The 29th annual HOLIDAY OPEN featured many surprises this year. It was held December 28th in Tulsa, directed by Jim Berry and assisted and organized by Harold Brown Jr.

The 50-player turnout was the largest in this event for a long time, and created an interesting mix of players, including the two Zilajeva sisters Veronika (home from school in Southern California for the holidays) and her younger sister Viktorija.

The surprise winner of the tournament, however, was a newcomer to the area, Thirupathy Ramanathan (1809) of Bentonville, Arkansas, who upset Veronika in the last round to go 4-0 and win $200. He was returning to rated chess play after a 15 year layoff!

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Thirupathy Ramanathan

In 2nd place right behind him were three players, Joe Veal and Naren Pullela (who both had solid results and drew each other in the last round), and Maxwell Xie; all at 3½.

Maxwell was the story of the tournament, however, as his play has caught fire in the past few months. He beat me in round 2, his first win against a NM I believe, and then he beat Luke Tran (1913). Only a last-round draw against Juan Villarreal prevented him from tying for first, and he was winning that game at one point. After this event he went on to do well in two others (see News Bites section) to raise his rating suddenly way over 1800. Congrats!

One nice feature of this event was that the top board was played on a special chess table that belonged to the late Jim Markley, who had bequethed it to Harold Brown. It was a nice tribute to Jim to use it for this event.

A special prize in this event was a nice quality wooden chess set donated by **Chris Walker**. It was for the top player U1500, and it couldn't have gone to a more perfect winner… Early in this event, Juan Villarreal, who is a fairly recent newcomer to tournament chess, had stopped me to say he was wanting to get a nice wooden set and what would I recommend. I gave him some advice — but the problem was solved when his fine result of 3 points meant he won the prize set himself!

Thanks to the Harvard Avenue Baptist Church for once again providing a comfortable venue, and to Harold Brown for his organizing work.

See full crosstable here:

http://www.uschess.org/msa/XtblMain.php?201912284662.1-10386161

The game Zilajeva - Wang is the GOTM this month (page 12) Some games from this event are in the games section, page 5.

Maxwell Xie (left) vs. Juan Villarreal.

Naren Pullela (left) vs Joe Veal.

Below, Veronika Zilajeva plays Thirupathy Ramanathan in the last round, using Jim Markley's chess table.

Chess: What You Really Look Like

A Public Service

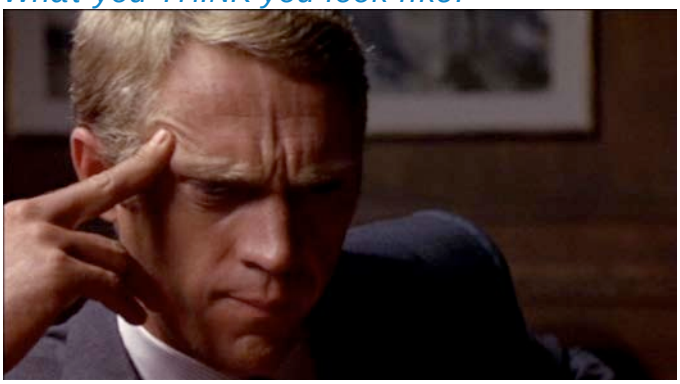
by Tom Braunlich

We chess players, when we get involved in a game, may not really know what we look like to spectators.

We are good at visualizing moves on the 64 squares, but maybe not so good at visualizing what non-chessplayers see. So, as a public service, here is a visual guide:

DURING A TOURNAMENT GAME:

What you THINK you look like:



Steve McQueen playing chess in The Thomas Crown Affair.

What you REALLY look like:

During a Post-Mortem with your opponent:

What you THINK non-chessplayers see:

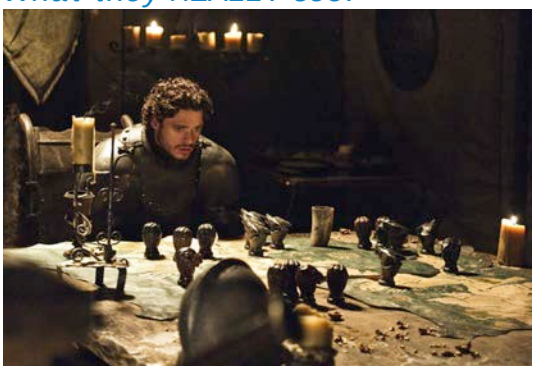
What they REALLY see:

"The Chessplayers" (1911) by Marcel Duchamp

WHILE YOU ARE STUDYING CHESS AT HOME:

What you THINK your family sees:

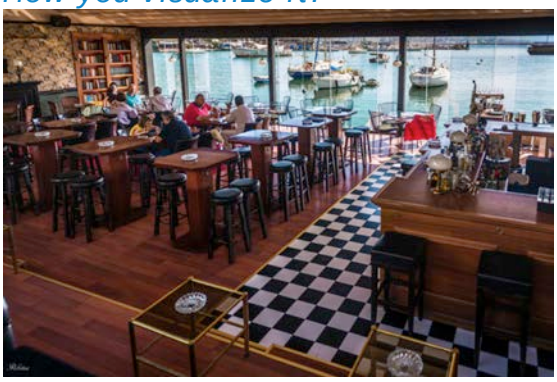
What they REALLY see:



"Game of Thrones"

Your Chess Club…

How you visualize it:

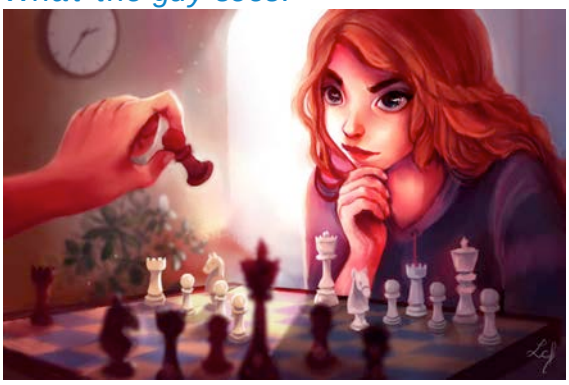


How the general public visualizes it:

Ladies, when playing a male opponent…

What you THINK you look like:

What the guy sees:



When you explain to your non-chessplayer friends how you won the big tournament game…

What you THINK the scene look like for spectators:

What it REALLY looks like:

David McCann Annotates

Oklahomans may remember David McCann was a chess-playing pastor who lived in Ada, OK, until about 2012 and hosted a couple tournaments there, in addition to being a frequent player. He now lives in south Texas, just a few miles north of the border, where he is a full-time pastor and has been teaching chess at a nearby retirement community and in the community library. "I have continued to play correspondence chess," he says, "and since moving here have participated in ICCF tournaments. The result is last year I received my master title. One game that helped me achieve my second master norm is attached. It is one of my most enjoyable games playing the KID. … It demonstrates, I think in a very instructive way, the typical thematic attack for black. … Many blessings upon you and all the chess players in OK this year."

Depasse, Jean-Marc (2344)
McCann, David (2149) [E73]

ICCF Champions League 2017, 09.05.2017

[Notes by McCann]

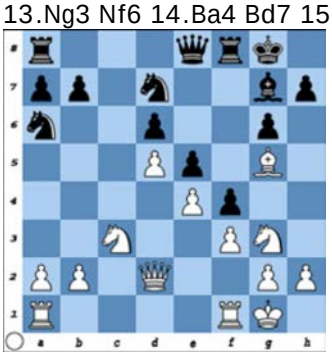
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.Be2 0–0 6.Bg5 Na6 7.Qd2 e5 8.d5 Qe8 9.Bd1 c6

[This is not the only option for black here, but I think it poses the most problems for white. White is behind in development and cannot castle for at least two moves. In the meantime, black is threatening white's center.]

10.f3 cxd5 11.cxd5 Nh5 12.Nge2 f5

[Black continues to proceed with the attack on white's center.]

13.Ng3 Nf6 14.Ba4 Bd7 15.Bxd7 Nxd7 16.0–0 f4



[This is a good place to spend some time evaluating the position. Typically in KID, white launches a Q-side attack with his pawns to break through black's position. A key pawn break is typically c4-c5, but white no longer has a c-pawn. White, thus, has a very difficult time getting a Q-side attack going. Black, on the other hand, usually attacks on the K-side launching pawns forward to f5, g5, h5, g4, etc. Here black's thematic attack is well underway. Most KID players would enjoy playing black's position here.]

17.Nge2 Nf6 18.Rac1 Qd7 19.Bh4 Bh6 20.Be1 g5 21.h3

[For the last few moves, white has simply been defending and responding to black's attack, while black's attack continues to roll along.]

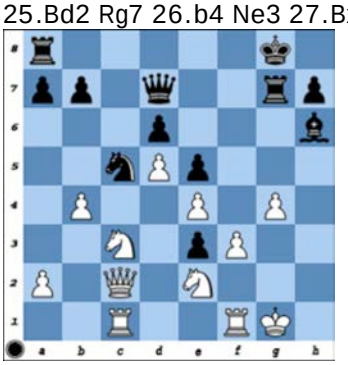
21...Rf7 22.Qd3 Nc5 23.Qc2

[It was somewhere along here that white offered a draw, which I declined. I think black is clearly better here.]

23...g4 24.hxg4 Nxg4

[A thematic sacrifice to blow up white's K position. Of course, white doesn't have to accept the sac, and is better off not doing so.]

25.Bd2 Rg7 26.b4 Ne3 27.Bxe3 fxe3 28.g4



28…Rxg4+

[Eventually white has to accept a sacrifice or get mated.]

29.fxg4 Qxg4+ 30.Ng3 Qxg3+ 31.Qg2 Qxg2+ 32.Kxg2 Nd3

[White is up the exchange, but black's e3 pawn is a monster that gives white some serious difficulties. In addition, black has a passed h-pawn, which can become the winning edge in the game.]

33.Rb1 Nf2 34.Ne2 Nxe4 35.Rbc1 Kg7 36.Rc7+ Kg6 37.Rxb7 Rc8 38.Rg1 Bg5 39.Rc1 Rf8 40.Rf1 Bf4 41.Rxa7 [White has gained two outside passers on the a and b files, but they are much too slow. Black's attack is too strong for white to repulse.]

41...h5 42.Ra3 Kh6 43.Rh1 Rb8 44.Ra4 Rg8+ 45.Kf1 Rf8 46.Kg2 Nf2 47.Ra1 h4 48.Nxf4 exf4 49.Kf3 h3 50.b5 h2 51.b6 Kg5 52.b7 Rb8 53.Rb4 h1Q+ 54.Rxh1 Nxh1 55.Rxf4 Rxb7 56.Kxe3 Ng3 57.Rf2 Ra7 58.Rg2 Ra3+ 59.Kd4 Kf6 60.Kc4 Ke5

[And white had seen enough. I think this is a very instructive game for understanding black's thematic K-side attack in the KID as well as an interesting endgame study.]

0–1

TOP 25

For FEBRUARY 2020

	Active Oklahoma Players			
	Player	This Month	Change	
1	Advait Patel	2537	-14	
2	Jeffrey Haskel	2362	0	
3	Howard Zhong	2289	-4	
4	Bart Gibbons	2217	0	
5	Tom Braunlich	2200	0	
6	Mark Hulsey	2199	0	
7	Ryan Amburgy	2121	58	▲
8	Chibuzo C Ilonze	2107	0	▼
9	Adonis Turner	2084	0	
10	Anthony Paolercio	2080	0	▲
11	Matt Dalthorp	2079	17	▲
12	Tom Patton	2077	0	
13	Veronika Zilajeva	2071	-20	▼
14	Charles D Unruh	2063	0	▼
15	James Long	2053	0	▲
16	David Luscomb	2045	0	▲
17	Michael Nugent	2042	0	▲
18	Charles M Unruh	2033	0	▲
19	Chuck Johnson	2010	0	▲
20	Jeff Colbert	2008	0	▲
21	Logan Zachare	1980	-17	▲
22	Stephen Gehly	1958	0	▲
23	Joe Dean Veal	1943	-3	▲
24	Charles Woodall	1937	0	▲
25	Paul Hodgden	1935	0	▲

Player of the Month

MAXWELL XIE

The Xie brothers have become a force and Max in particular is on a roll this past month. See pages 2 and 9.

GM Andrei Belozerov (2308)
Wayne Hatcher (2038) [B07]
ACROPOLIS XXXVI - Round 2 Chess.com, 24.11.2019
[Notes by TB]
Wayne Hatcher writes: "Well it finally happened.... It's not pretty, but I beat my first Grandmaster in a long-play game (correspondence play on chess.com at one move every three days)."

1.e4 d6 2.d4 Nf6 3.Nc3 g6 4.g3 Bg7 5.Bg2 0-0 6.Nge2 e5 7.h3

GM Belozerov, who has a current over-the-board rating of 2515, plays a line against Hatcher's Pirc that advanced players often use. It is solid and white does have opportunities for an attack later with f2-f4 or maybe g2-g4 followed by Ne2-g3. White plays h3 here so that he can play Be3 without worrying about ...Ng4 in response.

7...c6 8.a4 a5 9.0-0 Na6 10.Bg5

This looks inconsistent. If white wants to play this perhaps h3 was not necessary. More normal is Be3. [An example is: 10.Be3 Nb4 11.f4 exf4 12.gxf4 d5 13.e5 Nh5 14.Qd2 Bh6 15.Nd1 Bf5 16.Rc1 Na2 17.Ra1 Nb4 18.Rc1 Na2 19.Ra1 ½-½ Svidler,P (2730)-Ziska,H (2432)/Aix-les-Bains 2011]

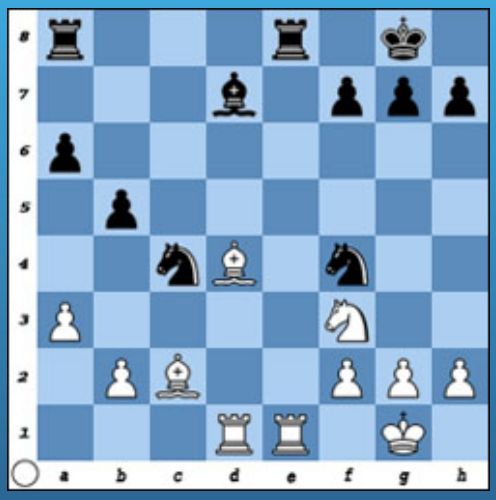
10...Nb4 11.Qd2 Be6 12.Rad1 Bc4= 13.Rfe1 Qb6!? 14.Be3 Qc7 15.b3 Ba6 16.g4 Rad8 17.Ng3

17... d5! 18.exd5 Nfxd5 19.Nxd5 Nxd5 20.Bh6 Bxh6 21.Qxh6 Nc3 22.Rxe5? f6

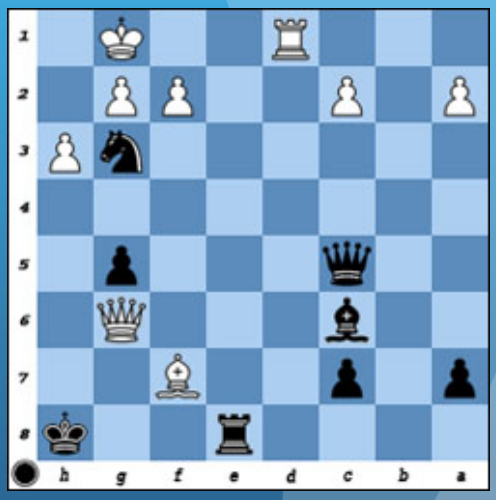
[22...Nxd1 23.Nf5 gxf5 24.Qg5+ Kh8

PUZZLES

Answers Next Page



White to move and win. (Easy)



Black to move and win. (Medium)

25.Qf6+=]

23.Ree1 Nxd1 24.Rxd1 b6≥ 25.c4 Bb7 26.d5 Qe5 27.Be4 Rd7 28.Re1 Rdf7 29.Re3 cxd5 30.Bxd5 Qa1+ 31.Kh2 Bxd5 32.cxd5 Qd4 33.Rf3 Qxd5 34.Qe3 Qd6 35.Kg2 Re7 36.Qc3 Qd5 37.Kh2 Qe5 38.Qc4+ Kg7 39.Re3 Qd6 40.Rd3 Qc7 41.Qxc7 Rxc7 42.Rd6 Rb7 43.Ne4 Rff7 44.Kg2 h6 45.Rd5 Rfd7 46.Rb5 Rdc7 47.Nd6 Rb8 48.Nc4 Rc5 49.Rxc5 bxc5 50.Nxa5 Rb4 51.Kf3 Kf7 52.Ke3 Ke6 53.Kd3 c4+ 54.Kc3 cxb3 55.Nxb3 Rf4 56.a5 Kd5 57.a6 Ra4 58.Nc1 Rxa6 59.Nd3 Ra3+ 60.Kd2 Ke4 0-1

Ramanathan Thirupathy (1809)
Zilajeva, Veronika (2090) [B44]
Holiday Open 2019 (4.1), 28.12.2019
[TB]
1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 e6 5.Bf4

A rare but tricky move. It appears to be little more than a trap, but it works if black becomes overly concerned with white's 'threat' of Nb5.

5...a6

[This is a tempting move for black if she was intending to play the Paulsen Variations (e6 +a6), even though it appears to 'fall into' the 'trap.' Note that a good alternative is 5...d6 6.Nb5 e5 7.Be3 transposing to other variations of the Lasker-Pelikan, but presumably Veronika didn't want to be tricked into that line.; However, better is 5...Nf6! 6.Nc3 Bb4 which is a line I believe is known to be fine for black (because Bf4 isn't very relevant).; Note that 5...Nf6 6.Nb5 e5 leaves white a tempo behind other lines.]

6.Nxc6 bxc6 7.Bd6

[Continuing with the main idea. My computer prefers 7.Bd3 d5 8.0-0 and thinks white is slightly better, but I doubt it. Black has a solid center in these lines.]

7...Be7?

Veronika is worried about losing the right to castle if white plays Bxf8. But this move is too slow and justifies white's attempt to dominate the d6 square. [7...Bxd6 8.Qxd6 Qe7 (or ...Qb6)

Answers to the Puzzles

(1) Black has two unprotected pieces — always a possible basis for a combination. Here white has a move that attacks both pieces at the same time: 1. Be3. One of the black pieces will be lost, since if 1. … Nxe3, 2. fxe3 keeps up the double attack.

(2) Black is faced with mate, and so must have something good here or it is over. Black has a queen sacrifice that surprisingly delivers mate even though the remaining pieces are few for black: 1. … Qxf2+! 2. Kxf2 Re2+ 3. Kxg3 (or 3. Kg1 Rxg2 mate) 3. … Rxg2 mate!

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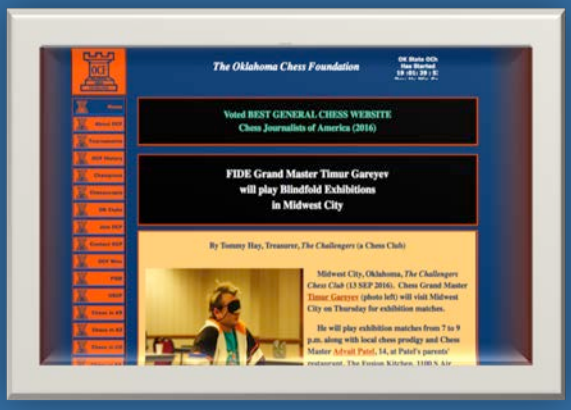
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FIDE Grand Master Timur Gareyev
will play Blindfold Exhibitions
in Midwest City

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is fine for black because if white plays 9.e5 f6 is then a good response, and gives an equal endgame.; I put this on a modern computer and it came up with an idea for black to get a good game while keeping queens on: 7...Bxd6 8.Qxd6 Nh6! with the idea of ...f6 and ...Nf7 which kicks out the queen and leaves black with a great game (pawn preponderance in the center).]

8.Nc3 Nf6 9.Qd4 0-0

[9...Bxd6 10.Qxd6 Qe7 should lead to an equal endgame, but no doubt Veronika was still hoping for more than that.]

10.0-0-0 Ne8 11.e5!? [11.Bxe7 Qxe7 12.e5 f6 13.f4≤] 11...Nxd6 12.exd6 Bf6 13.Qc5

13...Rb8?

Black's position is fine, about equal, but she needs to have a plan to complete development and over the next several moves somehow doesn't get it done. I think a simple solution here would be: 13...Bxc3 14.Qxc3 Qb6 and after white does something to defend the f2 pawn black plays ...Bb7 followed by ...c5 and the bishop finds good employment, and black can over the long run try to surround the pawn on d6 (as well as attacking down the b-file). This method is known from a similar Sicilian variation called the Four Knights. NM Bill Orton won a nice game very similarly at the OKC Open a couple months ago, as reported in OCM.

14.Na4!

A nice constraining move, preventing her idea of ...Qb6.

14...g6 15.f4?! Bg7 16.c3 Re8 17.Qa7 Rb7 18.Qc5 Rb8 19.Bd3 e5 20.g3 [20.Rhe1≤] 20...e4?

[20...exf4 21.gxf4 Qf6 22.Rhf1 Bf8 would have got counterplay against the d6 pawn. Now Black's e-pawn becomes very weak, and her queen's bishop still isn't developed.]

21.Bc4 Qf6 22.Rhe1 Kf8?

I think Zilajeva was in time trouble here, and she starts to self-destruct, as is not uncommon when out of practice in rapid games.

23.Qa7! A very strong move. 23...Rxb2?

[23...Rb7 24.Qa8 with the threat of Rxe4! as well as Bxa6, and white is winning. So, Veronika tried a Hail Mary which doesn't work.

24.Kxb2 [24.Nxb2?? Qxc3+] 1-0

Browne, Andrew (1894) –
Stahl, Martin (1520) [C21]
Holiday Open 2019 (4.4), 28.12.2019
[TB]
1.e4 e5 2.d4 exd4 3.c3 dxc3 4.Bc4 d6 5.Nf3 Be7 6.Qd5 Be6 7.Qxb7 Nd7 8.Bxe6 fxe6 9.Nxc3 Ngf6 10.Qc6 0-0 11.0-0 Rb8 12.Be3 Nb6 13.Ng5 Qc8 14.Nb5 Qb7 15.Qxc7 Qxc7 16.Nxc7 e5 17.Nge6 Rfc8 18.Bg5 Kf7 19.f4 Nbd7 20.fxe5 Nxe5 21.Be3 Rxb2 22.Bxa7 [22.Rfb1 Rxb1+ 23.Rxb1 Nxe4 24.Bxa7˜] 22...Rxc7 23.Nxc7 Rb7 24.Nb5 Rxb5 25.a4 Ra5 26.Bb6 Ra6 27.a5 Ke6 28.Ra4 Nfd7 29.Rb1 Nc6 30.Kf2 Nxb6 31.Rxb6 Rxa5 32.Rc4 Ra2+ 33.Kg3 Ne5 34.Rc3 h5 35.Rb7 h4+ 36.Kh3 g5 37.g4 Ng6 38.Rf3 Nf4+ 39.Rxf4 gxf4 40.Rb4 Ra3+ 41.Kg2 h3+ 42.Kf2 Bh4+ 43.Kf1 f3 44.Rb1 Ra2 45.Kg1 Re2 46.Rf1 f2+ 47.Kh1 Re1 48.g5 Rxf1# 0-1

Braunlich, Tom (2200)
Xie, Maxwell (1721) [D12]
Holiday Open 2019 (2.1), 28.12.2019
[Notes by TB]
Maxwell pulls off a big upset.

1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.e3 Bf5 4.c4 c6 5.Nc3 e6 6.Nh4 Bg4 7.Qb3 Qc7 8.f3 Bh5 9.g4 g5

10.Ng2 Bg6

11.Bd2?

[I chose a complex variation in order to put pressure on the kid, but he is not cooperating. He keeps making good moves! But this idea was going too far, planning to castle queenside and blow open the center even though I'm losing a pawn on the kingside. But I'm underestimating how well Maxwell is playing. Better is 11.cxd5 exd5 12.h4 with a small advantage for white.]

11...Nbd7 12.0-0-0 h5! 13.cxd5 cxd5 14.e4?! hxg4 15.exd5 Nxd5 16.fxg4 Bb4 17.a3 Bxc3 18.bxc3 Rxh2 19.Rxh2 Qxh2 20.Bxg5 Qg3 [20...Rc8!] 21.Bh4 Qxg4 22.c4

Black has won a pawn but white has 2Bs and an initiative against black's uncastled king as compensation. Against many young players I would expect to win here, even if the computer prefers black, but Maxwell continues to play quite well under pressure.

22...Nf4 23.Qb4 f6 24.Qd2 Nxg2 25.Qxg2 Qf4+ 26.Kb2 Bf7?

Finally he makes a cautious move and white gets an edge. [26...0-0-0 is better, with a small edge for black remaining.]

27.Bg3! Qf5 28.Bd3 Qh5 29.Rh1 Qa5 30.Be1?

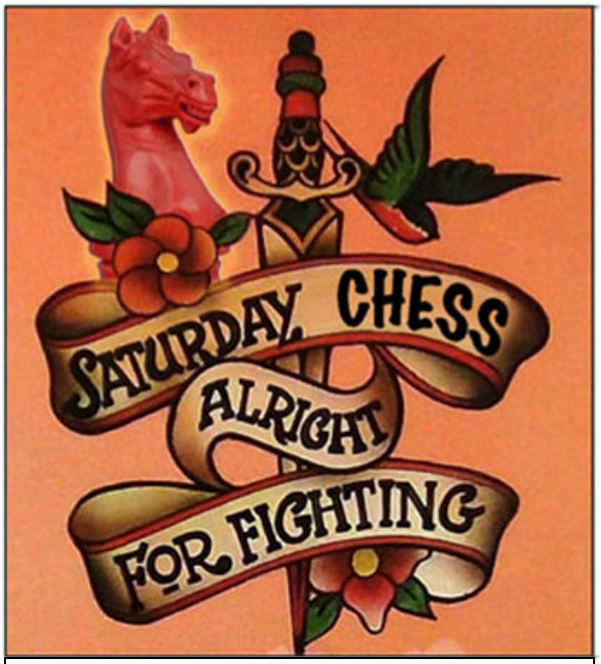
[30.Qxb7 is winning. In time trouble I rejected this because of the line 30...Qd2+ 31.Bc2 Qxd4+ 32.Kb1 Qb6+ trading queens and black remains up a pawn, except I didn't see that after 33.Qxb6 Nxb6 34.c5 white wins a piece (due to the threat of Rh8+ if the knight moves).]

30...Qb6+

Here I got caught up in the question of which king move to make, or whether Bb4 would be a good trap, and stupidly lost track of my time and overstepped.

My computer after 30...Qb6+ rates 31.Ka2 or 31.Kc2 as dynamically equal, for example 31.Ka2 0-0-0 32.Bc3 Rg8 33.Qc2 f5 (Black must prevent Rb1 + Be4 targeting the b7 square with an attack) 34.Rh7= Although I feel I played poorly this game, I must say Maxwell played good consistent aggressive moves and fully deserved to win! I look forward to seeing how well the Xie brothers continue their improvement in 2020!]

0-1



Play in the Whitcomb ConSat Tournament Feb 22 & 29. See the *Upcoming Tournaments* page.

Blindfold Chess at the Piano

Check this out. On the Russian TV show that is their equivalent of "America's Got Talent," GM Daniil Yuffa did something I've never seen before. He played and won three simultaneous games of blindfold chess while also playing Chopin on the piano. Watch it here on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sjbLHz_Z0ec

Okies in Vegas

Several Oklahoma players went to Las Vegas over the Holidays to play in the big annual North American Open, and many of them did very well.

In the U2100 section, Ryan Amburgy scored 5½/7 to tie for 5th place, winning $533 and raising his rating up near 2100.

Matt Dalthorp also did very well in this expert section, scoring an impressive 5-2.

In the U1700 section Rahul Pai scored a fine 5½ points to tie for 4th place and win $725, pushing his rating over 1700 for the first time.

The Secret Open

A "Secret Open" tournament was held January 12 in OKC, organized by Rebecca Rutledge and directed by Joe Veal.

What exactly was secret about it remains a mystery. There is a rumor that conspiracy buffs will be discussing it soon after midnight on Coast-to-Coast AM radio.

What is not a secret any more is the fine play of Maxwell Xie, who won this event 4-0, continuing his impressive play in mid-length rapid chess games from the Holiday Open. Here he defeated Temple, Zachare, Graham, and Bufford to raise his rating an additional 120 points to 1852! That represents a gain of 500 points in the past year, and about 300 points in the last three months! His younger brother Kelvin is just as talented and clearly they push each other upward.

The following weekend Maxwell finished 2nd in an OSCO Premier tournament (also rapid G/45) at the University of Tulsa, scoring 3-1 losing only to the equally hot Ryan Amburgy who scored 4-0 in a strong field of 18 talented juniors with 1200+ ratings.

It's good to see so many young players doing well and participating in traditional events.

CHECK MATE

Kings and pawns can move one square.
Queens can wander anywhere.
Kings are limited in gait
Over-cautious and sedate;
But when action gets too hot
Kings retreat; the pawns cannot.

Pawns must leap into the fray
Two steps forward; Hip, Hooray;
Then until the war is done
They advance, one step by one
Moving only left and right
When the enemy's in sight.

Bishops, hampered by their creed,
Follow where diagonals lead;
Whether black or red they be,
There they cling religiously.
From the palace to the grave
Bishops never misbehave.

Mounted knights are different, though.
No one follows where they go.
One diagonal; one ahead;
Red to black and back to red:
Charging left or right they ride
To attack from any side.

So in triumph or defeat
Pawns advance and kings retreat.
War is fun and so is Chess.
Peace is dull and effortless.
What if pawns and bishops die?
More will follow bye and bye.

—*Peter B. Payne*

Zilajeva, Veronika (2086)
Wang, Oscar (1782)
2019 Holiday Open, Tulsa OK (3), 01.12.2019
[TB]
A very nice game by both sides from the Holiday Open…

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5 4.Bf4

A trendy move to play against the Grunfeld, perhaps spurred on by the popularity of the London Opening in GM play.

4...Bg7 5.e3 0-0 6.Rc1

The idea of this variation is quick pressure down the c-file to attempt to force black into a cramped position.

6...c6

[ÅThis is the normal move here, although 6...c5 is an aggressive try also. Lately many GMs have been playing 6...Be6 because 7.cxd5 Nxd5 8.Nxd5 Qxd5=]

7.Nf3 a6?!

[This is a book move although I would prefer 7...Qb6 8.Qb3 Be6 with a good game for black.]

8.b3

This appears to be a new move here. The idea seems to be that white is prepared to hold the c4 point if black now plays the normal plan with ...b5.The normal move in my database used to be 8. h3, to prevent ...Bg4, but black gets an okay game. Recently Mamedyarov won a nice game with 8. c5.

8...Bg4

[8...b5 9.Bd3 bxc4 10.bxc4 Be6 is a possibility, with the idea that if white plays 11.c5 Black is in time for the key move 11...Nh5]

9.Be2 Qa5 10.Qd2 Nh5!

I am glad to see Oscar playing so aggressively against a higher-rated player. He initiates complications while her king is still in the center.

11.Be5!?

[First of all, note that Oscar has set a very nice trap: 11.Nxd5? seemingly winning material 11...Qxd2+ 12.Nxd2 Bxe2 13.Nxe7+ Kh8 14.Kxe2 Nxf4+ 15.exf4 Re8 oops.
No doubt Veronika was aware that she could instead get a small edge with 11.Bxb8 Raxb8 12.cxd5 cxd5 13.h3 Bxf3 14.Bxf3 However, she presumably wanted more than that.]

11...Bxf3! 12.Bxg7

[She must continue forward as otherwise she ends up with a weak e-pawn, i.e. 12.Bxf3 Bxe5 13.dxe5 dxc4 14.Bxh5 gxh5 15.bxc4 Rd8 16.Qe2 Qxe5 and black is better.]

12...Bxg2 The "desperados" continue.

13.Rg1?

[Oscar had calculated 13.Bxf8 Bxh1 14.Bxe7 Qc7! 15.Bg5 Qxh2 and black is up a pawn, although white has some compensation and the computer says it is dynamically equal. Very nice calculation by Oscar. Veronika understandably chooses a different way to play it, but…]

13...Nxg7 14.Rxg2 Nd7

Again, black has emerged up a pawn but white has some compensation. Veronika's idea was that she could continue with h2-h4-h5

and attack black's weakened kingside. However, this backfires and it is her own king that proves more vulnerable.

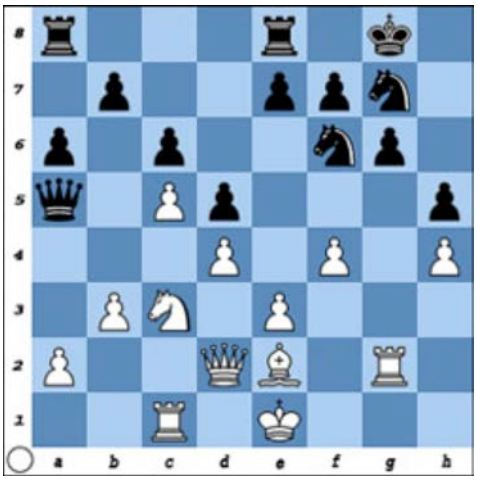
15.h4?

[Perhaps a better try would be to continue tactics with 15.b4!? Qxb4 16.Rb1 Qd6 17.Rxb7 If then 17...Rfb8 white can try 18.c5 Qe6 19.Qb2 and the game goes on, with white fighting for control of the file. *(19.Bg4 f5* appears to just help black.*)*]

15...Nf6 16.c5 Rfe8

Threatening ...e5.

17.f4 h5



A nice positional move, ending white's hoped-for kingside attack and winning some good outpost squares for his knights.

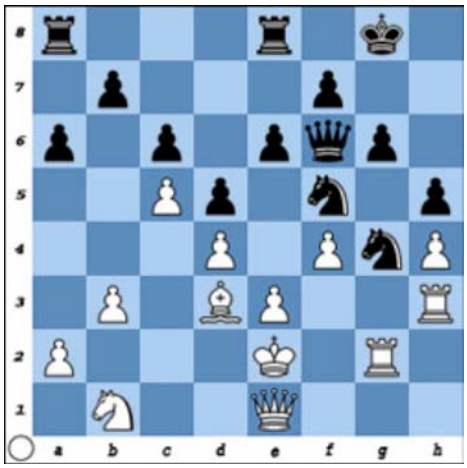
18.Bd3 e6 19.Ke2?!

Maybe 20 Kd1 is better with the idea of castling by hand Kd1-c2-b2.

19...Nf5 20.Rh1 Ng4 21.Rh3 Qd8

Pressuring h4 pawn while redeploying the Q to a better spot.

22.Qe1 Qf6 23.Nb1



Nxd4+!

Oscar's only problem in this position is that he was getting very low on time, and had to choose between this sacrifice and another one he showed me after the game [23...Nfxe3 24.Rxe3 Qxd4 25.Reg3 e5 winning.]

24.exd4 Qxd4

[Later Oscar pointed out a nifty shot: 24...e5!! 25.fxe5 Nxe5!]

25.Qc3 Qxf4

Oscar evaluated this as winning for black, with four healthy center pawns for the piece, and he is right. But now both players were down to seconds on their clocks, with the time control having a 15 second increment. So anything can happen.

26.Rf3 Qc7 27.Nd2 e5 28.Bb1 e4 29.Rf1 Qe7 30.Rh1

Here, with about 25 seconds left and faced with many good continuations Oscar was about to play ...Rad8 when he lost on time.

It's a shame. The pawns will roll down the board like space invaders. The method in a position like this would be to first play some prophylactic moves (like safeguarding the king with ...Kh7), then push the pawns, careful not to allow counterplay, keeping everything protected. But sometimes a player with a nice position gets mesmerized by an abundance of attractive possibilities. It happened to me this event also; so it is a lesson for all of us! 1-0

UPCOMING TOURNAMENTS

For More Tournament Info Visit the USCF Tournament Site:
www.uschess.org/tlas/upcoming.php

FEB 13-17 SOUTHWEST CLASS CHAMPIONSHIP Fort Worth TX

9-SS (Master Section) 7-SS (other sections); G/90+30; DFW Airport Marriott South, 4151 Centreport Blvd., Fort Worth, TX 76155. Multiple schedules and sections. Questions: chesstour.com,

FEB 22 & 29 WHITCOMB CHARITY MEMORIAL ConSat Tulsa OK

4-SS with two traditional G/90+30 games played on each of two Consecutive Saturdays. Harvard Avenue Baptist Church, 3235 E. 17th St. (17th & Harvard), Tulsa, OK. Three Sections: Open, Reserve (U1800), Novice (U1200). Prizes (b/30): $150 first place in each section, plus more prizes if entries allow. REG.: Each day, 9:00-10:15am. Rounds: 10:30am – 3:00pm each day. BYES: Two 1/2-point byes for either day if you can't make it to one of the game days. Entry Fee: (Half of all entry fees goes to widow of the late Bran Whitcomb.) $30 for both days, $20 per day if you can only play one day. Adv. Entries via PayPal: www.paypal.me/Braunlich Adv. Entries by Mail: T.Braunlich, 1638 S. Carson, #803, Tulsa, OK 74119. Info:tom.braunlich@cox.net LS W. Free coffee and refreshments.

MAR 7-8 FOUR STATES WINTER OPEN Joplin MO

Sat: 4-SS, G/60 d5. Sun: 4-SS, G/20,+3 and 4-SS, G/5,+3. Hilton Garden Inn, 2644 E. 32nd St., Joplin, MO 64804. Sat: 2 Sections, Open: $120-80, U1600 60, U1400: $60-40. 4.0 Bonus: $20.. Sun: Quick and Blitz one section each $75, $50, U1600 $30, U1400 $20. Prizes: b/25 full-paid entries. EF: $50 for both days, $40 Sat only, $20 Sun only. $10 discount for preregistration. K-12 players 50% entry, play for rating only; MCA membership required, OSA Reg.: 8-9. Sat: 9:30-11:45-2:30-4:45. Sun:1st round 9:30 Byes: One 1/2 point bye if requested before round 2 Ent: martin.stahl@joplinchess.org with cash on-site, paypal.me/joplinchess. Joplin Chess Club, 2609 New Hampshire, Joplin, MO 64804. Cks payable to Martin Stahl. Info: joplinchess.org, 417-483-1554.

APR 18 18th RED RIVER SHOOTOUT Davis OK

"The annual team match between the most fanatical chess players in Oklahoma and Texas."

Don't miss this annual fun tournament, in which all Oklahoma and Texas players — of all ratings — are eligible to join their team.
Sign up quickly, as team slots are filling up. Contact your team captain:

Oklahoma —	Phil Stegall	stegali@aol.com
Texas —	Troy Gillispie	tgillisp@ymail.com
Inquiries —	Rebecca Rutledge	rebecca@youthchessok.org

Location: Treasure Valley Casino (Meeting Room), I-35 & Hwy 7, Davis OK.
Hotel: Special chess rate of $89.10 (no extra taxes or fees) is available at the hotel. (580)369-3223.
To play in the Match Section, you must register with your Team Captain no later than Sunday, 12 April 2020 at HIGH Noon. The Team Captains will review and approve the Team Rosters with the Chief TD. The official Team Match Pairings will be final on Wednesday, 15 April 2020. The rosters will be announced the day of the tournament. Your best chance for getting on the team is to ensure your USChess membership is current through 30 April 2020 (or later) and REGISTER with the Chief TD and your Team Captain EARLY.

SIDE EVENTS include Texas Hold'em tournament (Friday night), Blitz and Bughouse tournaments, and a group dinner at the hotel restaurant. INFO: http://rrsochess.net/rrso_home.html

By IM John Donaldson

REVIEW: Three New Books by Russell Enterprises, Inc.

Three new books by New England based Russell Enterprises (www.russell-enterprises.com) reflect the diversity of its offerings the past three decades.

Fight 1.d4 with the Tarrasch: A Complete Black Repertoire vs. 1.d4 (2019, 384 pages, figurine algebraic, $31.95) by Vassilios Kotronias is a book that takes no shortcuts coming in at close to 400 oversized double column pages. Such attention to detail is the norm for the Greek Grandmaster who once wrote a 720-page work on the Kings Indian Fianchetto for Black.

The present work, as the title implies, provides a complete repertoire for Black against 1.d4 based on the Tarrasch (1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 c5) but also covers non 2.c4 lines like the London (Bf4 and Nf3), Torre (Bg5 and Nf3), Veresov (Nc3, Bg5) and Jobava (2.Nc3 and 3.Bf4).

Kotronias is looking to provide winning chances for Black with the Tarrasch and to that end the central theme of this book is to play …c5-c4 and not to accept an isolated queen pawn. This is particularly the case in the main line after 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 c5 4.cxd5 exd5 5.Nf3 Nc6 6.g3 Nf6 7.Bg2 Be7 8.0-0 0-0 9.Bg5 where he briefly examines 9…cxd4 but prefers 9…c4 (as did Aagard and Ntirlis in their 2011 book, *The Tarrasch Defense*). This chapter is one of the most critical in the book and analysis of key lines routinely runs 25 moves deep.

The only line where Black doesn't aim for …c4 is where he can't play it, namely 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 c5 4.cxd5 exd5 5.Nf3 Nc6 6.g3 Nf6 7.Bg2 Be7 8.0-0 0-0 9.dxc5. Here Kotronias makes a brave attempt to rehabilitate 9…d4 but ultimately concludes he doesn't trust it preferring 9…Bxc5.

After 9…Bxc5 the traditional attempts are 10.Na4 and 10.Bg5, but I was curious what the Greek GM intended against the currently popular 10.a3, recommended by Grandmaster Adrien Demuth in his book *The Modernized Reti* (2nd edition). Interestingly both authors give the same variation but disagree on their assessment of the resulting position: 10…Ne4 11.Nxd5 Be6 12.Nc3 Nxc3 13.bxc3 Qxd1 14.Rxd1 Rad8 15.Re1 Na5 16.a4 Nb3 17.Rb1 b6 18.e3 Rfe8 19.Nd4 Nxd4 20.cxd4 Bf5 21.e4 Bxd4 22.Bg5 f6 23.Bxf6 Bxf6 24.exf5 Rxe1+ 25.Rxe1.

Here Demuth writes: "We have kept an extra pawn, and even if opposite-colored bishops appeared on the board, our 4 v 2 majority on the kingside may be difficult to stop in an actual game.

Kotronias continues his analysis with 26.Bc6 Rd2 27.Bb5 Bd4 28.Re2 Rxe2 29.Bxe2 Ke7 evaluating the position as equal.

Who is correct? The analysis Kotronias gives starting after the diagram position looks logical. Black wants to trade rooks and White can't avoid it without either allowing his king to be cut off on the first rank or tying his rook to the defense of the f-pawn. It's hard to imagine him playing for a win in either situation.

This leads to the position after 29…Ke7. Is it a draw? Here I think both authors are correct in a fashion. In a practical game White definitely looks to have chances. He will advance his kingside pawns (f5, f4, g5 and h4), put his king on e4 and bishop on c4 and look for chances to play f6. This is very dangerous and if Black stays passive and allows this he will likely lose.

He should probably play …h5 early to stop this plan. It looks a little scary as the h-pawn is difficult to defend but the idea would be to counterattack against the pawn on f5 or use the bishop to attack the pawns on h2 and g3. This looks like it should hold. Caveat emptor - this analysis should be checked by a strong computer!

Of course, the possibility that a non-professional player might reach this ending is close to zero and that in some ways describes this book, which is geared towards players from 2200 on up. Strong Grandmasters will love it, but it is way too much for all but the most ambitious amateur. Kotronias hints at this when he writes the amount of analysis that must be memorized in the Tarrasch is much less than in the King's Indian but that are still critical lines that must be known by heart, particularly in the variations arising after 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 c5 4.cxd5 exd5 5.Nf3 Nc6 6.g3 Nf6 7.Bg2 Be7 8.0-0 0-0 9.Bg5 c4.

Fight 1.d4 with the Tarrasch: A Complete Black Repertoire vs. 1.d4 is a magnificent book but it is aimed at a very high level.

Chess Tests (1019, 206 pages, figurine algebraic, $24.95) is the last book by the noted trainer and author Mark Dvoretsky who died in 2016. This work is not to be confused with a puzzle book where one can solve dozens of tactics or checkmates in a few minutes. These "tests" are considerably more challenging and designed to broaden one's perspective as well as give pleasure.

Players from 2000 to Grandmaster will benefit from a careful study of this book.

ChessBase is simultaneously one of the greatest and most frustrating tools created to help chess players improve. The program has been continually evolving since the late 1980s but for a long time a proper manual on how to get the most benefit from it was lacking. That gap was filled with the publication of *ChessBase Complete: Chess in the Digital Age* by Jon R. Edwards (Russell Enterprises 2014) which went up to ChessBase 12. Five years later Edwards is back with an update to ChessBase 15. *Chess Base Complete: 2019 Supplement* (2019, 92 pages, $14.95) explores and explains all the developments in the last three updates including a free suite of online tools for the world wide web, more powerful searches and the ability to store and share data in a "chess cloud".

Who is this book for? Professional players, authors and journalists who use ChessBase constantly in their work will find this must reading, as will older amateur players who enjoy using technology and young users. Edwards (and ChessBase) go well beyond the needs of older players who only want to enter their games, analyze them and look up openings and opponents.